

By C. G. C. DICKSON, M.Sc.*

(Concluded from Volume 94, page 35)

A new race of *Poecilmitis nigricans* (Aurivillius).

The first example of this exquisite little butterfly was secured by William Burchell at Genadendal, in the Cape Colony, in 1815 (i.e., in one of its races); and the specimen is still preserved in the University Museum, Oxford. It was known to Trimen as a "variety" of *Poecilmitis* [*Zeritis*] *thysbe* (L.), but only from very few specimens. Aurivillius described it himself as a "variety" of *thysbe* in Seitz' *Macrolep. of World*, 13: 430 (1924), under the present name; the type-locality being the Muizenberg Mountains in the Cape Peninsula. The writer has realised since first capturing specimens of *nigricans* on the Fransch Hoek Mountains in November, 1945, that the males, at least, from there too, differed from the nominate insect, especially with regard to the wider black band in the hindwing upperside. This feature is very obvious also in males from the Klein and Groot Zwartbergen and examples from these localities have been used for the description given hereunder.

Poecilmitis nigricans zwartbergae subsp. nov.

Male.

The forewings tend to be somewhat less pointed than in nominate *P. nigricans*.

Upperside.

In comparison with nominate *nigricans* the black band of hindwing is normally much broadened; at its greatest width, its inner edge being 3.5–4.5 mm. from the wing-margin (the width varying somewhat in different specimens and at least in one male

*"Blencathra", Cambridge Avenue, St. Michael's Estate, Cape Town.

LEGEND TO PLATE II

Pseudonympha camdeboo spec. nov.: fig. 1. ♂ holotype (upperside); fig. 2. ♀ allotype (upperside); fig. 3. ♂ holotype (underside); fig. 4 ♀ allotype (underside).

Lepidochrysops jamesi claassensi subsp. nov.: fig. 5. ♂ holotype (upperside); fig. 6. ♀ allotype (upperside); fig. 7. ♂ holotype (underside); fig. 8. ♀ allotype (underside).

Poecilmitis nigricans zwartbergae subsp. nov.: fig. 9. ♂ holotype (upperside); fig. 10 ♀ allotype (upperside); fig. 11. ♂ holotype (underside); fig. 12. ♀ allotype (underside).

Poecilmitis palmus margueritae subsp. nov.: fig. 13. ♂ holotype (upperside); fig. 14. ♀ allotype (upperside); fig. 15. ♂ holotype (underside); fig. 16. ♀ allotype (underside).

All figures natural size. Note: The bronzy-brown coloration of the upperside of *L. j. claassensi* is not represented correctly in figs. 5 & 6, in which the tone is much more reddish than in nature. All the other figures in the plate show the true colour satisfactorily. (Colour reproduction by Unifoto (Pty.), Ltd., Cape Town).

seen, not specially broadened). Veining across the submarginal orange-red portion of the wing more conspicuously black-scaled than in nominate race.

Underside.

Dark streak of forewing parallel with the distal-margin, usually so broadened as to coalesce with, or at least touch, the black spots in areas 2 and 4 (one exception in this respect, has been seen). Hindwing with *deeper and more prominent* brown or rufous-brown colouring, as a "zone", beyond the middle of the wing, in nearly all specimens, than in nominate *nigricans*, and this darkening also applying in general to the wing near the base; while in the least darkly marked examples there is, anyway, more contrast between the dark and light areas.

Length of forewing: 12.75 - 15.0 mm. (13.5 mm. in holotype).

Female.

Forewings more rounded distally than in the female of nominate *nigricans*.

Upperside.

Blue from bases of all wings rather deeper and duller than in the female of nominate *nigricans*, and the dark marginal border broader, that of the hindwings more noticeably so, in comparison with the latter taxon. Dark costal border of forewing also tends to be broader and is in some cases much more prominent.

Underside.

The dark streak parallel with the distal-margin of the forewings has not been markedly broadened in all of the females concerned, though broadened in a number, including the allotype.

Length of forewing: 13.25 - 16.5 mm. (the former measurement, in allotype).

♂ Holotype, WESTERN CAPE PROVINCE: Zwartberg Pass, 7.XII.1973 (no collector's name); British Museum Reg. No. Rh. 18699.

♀ Allotype, W. CAPE PROVINCE: data as for holotype 21.II.1977 (Dr. J. B. Ball); British Museum Reg. No. Rh 18700

Paratype in author's collection: data as for holotype (at approx. 5,000 ft.), 29.XI.1969., one ♂ (C.G.C.D.).

Paratypes in Coll. Dr. J. B. Ball: as holotype, 21.II.1977, one ♂ (Dr. J. B. Ball); 2.XI.1968, one ♂ 3.X.1968, three ♂♂ (Dr. J. Kaplan); 7.XII.1973, one ♂ (no collector's name).

Paratypes in Coll. C. W. Wykeham: as holotype, 27.XII.1969, two ♂♂ (C. W. Wykeham); Seven Weeks Poort (Klein Zwartberg), 1.XII.1962, two ♂♂, one ♀ (C. W. W.).

Paratypes in Coll. Transvaal Museum: as holotype, 9.XI.1946, two ♂♂ one ♀ (K. M. Pennington); 29.X.1963, three ♂♂ 29.X.1963, two ♀♀ 4.I.1965, one ♀ 4.X.1965, two ♀♀ 20.X.1966, one ♀ (R. Badham). Seven Weeks Poort (Klein Zwartbergen), 30.X.1941, three ♂♂ two ♀♀ (Dr. G. van Son); 29.XI.1957, one ♂, one ♀ (K. M. Pennington).

The larger examples, of both sexes, of *zwartbergae*, attain a larger size than the largest ones of *P. n. nigricans*.

Specimens of this group from the Fransch Hoek Mountains (and the adjoining Middenkrantzberg) are larger on the whole than the nominate race and both sexes are normally devoid of orange in the cilia, on the upper-side of the forewing, with white spaces only, between the black portions. The black hindwing bands of the males are decidedly wider in most specimens, than in nominate *nigricans*, but with the width varying noticeably in some individual specimens. On the underside, the dark streak parallel with the distal-margin of the forewing tends to be wider than in the nominate race but the hindwing underside is more like that of the latter race, than of *zwartbergae*. This insect can be regarded as representing another race in itself. Male examples from the Hermanus Mountains seem to be more similar to nominate *nigricans*: i.e., from the few seen by the present writer.

Grateful thanks are due to Dr. J. B. Ball for furnishing a high proportion of the specimens employed in the study of *P. n. zwartbergae*; and to Dr. L. Vári, of the Transvaal Museum.

A new race of *Poecilmitis palmus* (Cramer).

The striking features of this race of *Poecilmitis palmus* (Cramer) were first appreciated after a male specimen in good condition had been caught by Mrs. K. M. Wykeham, when accompanied by her husband the late K. M. Wykeham, 6 miles to the east of Knysna, in the South Western Cape Province, on 24th January, 1964. In March of the following year the locality was revisited by the writer with Mr. Wykeham and a useful series of further specimens of both sexes, in perfect condition, was secured. The main characters of this race are described below.

Poecilmitis palmus margueritae subsp. nov.

Male (upperside).

Dark basal scaling more extensive than in the nominate race, especially in the hindwing, and of a noticeably darker, bluish-black, colour; the inner-marginal concavity also darker. Black spotting over the orange-red ground-colour of the wings tends to be more prominent than in the nominate race and the distal-margin of the forewings broader; while in the hindwing there is always a continuous black marginal border, which is almost consistently relatively prominent, extending down to at least vein 6. There is less orange in the cilia of the forewing and less encroachment of this on to the actual wing-surface, than in the nominate race: this applying, certainly, to all specimens that have been seen from the type-locality itself.

Underside.

Continuous dark streak parallel with distal-margin of forewing broader and darker than is normally the case in the nominate race and the darkened zones (more or less reddish-brown) of the hindwing, darker and more richly coloured than in the nominate race.

Some darkening of the abdomen is also apparent.

Length of forewing: 12.75 – 14.75 mm. (the latter measurement, in holotype).

Female (Upperside).

All characters as in the male, but the black spotting of the wings is inclined to be even more pronounced, while the black border of the hindwing is also more pronounced and extensive, and contrasts in these respects quite markedly with that of the nominate race.

Underside.

Characters in general much as in the male, but the dark line parallel with the distal-margin of the forewing has not, in the females seen, been widened as much as in the males.

Length of forewing: 14.5 – 16.0 mm. (the latter measurement, in allotype).

♂ Holotype, WESTERN CAPE PROVINCE: 6 miles E. of Knysna, 13.III.1965 (C. G. C. Dickson); British Museum Reg. No. Rh. 18701

♀ Allotype, W. CAPE PROVINCE: data as for holotype; British Museum Reg. Rh. 18702

Paratypes in author's collection: data as for holotype, 24.I.1964, one ♂ (Mrs. K. M. Wykeham); 13.III.1965, two ♂♂, one ♀ (C.G.C.D.).

Paratypes in Coll. Dr. J. B. Ball, W. CAPE PROVINCE: Keurbooms River Forest Reserve, nr. Nature's Valley (30 miles E. of Knysna), 18.XII.1979, five ♂♂. [It may be mentioned that Dr. Ball has discovered other localities for this butterfly in the district as a whole. Some of the specimens concerned have been less extreme than others in the development of the dark marking].

Paratypes in Coll. Transvaal Museum: data as for holotype, one ♂ (C.G.C.D.).

The writer possesses two male specimens of *P. palmus* from the Witteklip Mountain, 23 miles W. of Port Elizabeth in the Eastern Cape Province, captured by Mr. L. Hersalek on 10/12/67 and 15/1/68; and these examples bear a resemblance on the upperside to Knysna ones. Mr. V. L. Pringle has subsequently caught other specimens there and, as he has pointed out, the undersides of this population are not always specially darkened.

The habitat near Knysna is in a slight, sloping depression, somewhat damp and with grass, Bracken and other plants present. One of the chief food-plants of *P. palmus*, the yellow-flowered shrub *Chrysanthemoides monilifera* T. Norl. (Compositae) occurs abundantly there. This particular race of this brilliantly coloured Lycaenid is named with much pleasure after Mrs. K. M. Wykenham – with respect to her second Christian name. The original specimen concerned is figured in colour in *Pennington's Butterflies of Southern Africa*, Pl. 125, fig. 426 III (1978).

THE BEAUTIFUL SNOT: BOMOLOCHA FONTIS THUNB. – I was interested in the reference (*Ent. Rec.* 93: 241) to the occurrence of *B. fontis* in Kent in places where bilberry was absent. In July 1979 I saw several examples of this species in the Gower peninsula, South Wales in a wood where so far as I could see there was no bilberry.

In Staffordshire, *B. fontis* was at one time common in several oak woods with a dense undergrowth of bilberry. From some of these woods it has disappeared following clear felling; although the bilberry remains the insect evidently needs the woodland cover, and it is notable that it does not occur on bilberry on open heathland. More recently, however, there has been evidence that the species is on the increase and it has appeared in several woods from which it was not previously recorded.

Both in Staffordshire and in South Wales there have been single occurrences in moth traps in places where there was no bilberry. – R. G. WARREN, Wood Rindings, 32 Whitmore Road, Trentham, Stoke-on-Trent, ST4 6AP.